

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: GDS

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SUBJECT: MORNING SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT REPORTS

1. SPANISH SAHARA

A. MAURITANIA SEEKS US ARMS

THE ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER HAS FORMALLY REQUESTED GRANT AID FOR HEAVY MACHINE GUNS AND AMMUNITION BUT, IF THAT IS NOT FEASIBLE, INDICATED GIRM WILLINGNESS TO PURCHASE THE EQUIPMENT. AMBASSADOR HANDYSIDE (WHO REPLIED THAT GRANT AID WAS UNLIKELY) RECOMMENDS THE REQUEST RECEIVE A PROMPT AND FAVORABLE RESPONSE--THOUGH NOT NECESSARILY ON A GRANT BASIS.

B. HASSAN WORRIES

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AMBASSADOR NEUMAN URGES A RAPID AND FORTHCOMING REPLY TO A

REQUEST BY KING HASSAN FOR EXPEDITED F-5 DELIVERIES. IN THE SAHARA THE KING THINKS:

--THE ALGERIANS WILL CONTINUE TO OPPOSE MOROCCO THROUGH POLISARIO GUERRILLAS RATHER THAN BY DIRECT ATTACK.

--MOROCCO CAN HANDLE THE POLISARIO, DESPITE SOVIET AND ALGERIAN AID, BUT IS NOT READY TO CONFRONT THE "WHOLE SOCIALIST WORLD."

--MAURITANIAN MILITARY WEAKNESS IS A MAJOR CONCERN, AND THE KING HAS AGREED TO STATION MOROCCAN TROOPS THERE IF NECESSARY. (SECRET) RABAT 121, 122 (EXDIS) AND (SECRET) NOUAKCHOTT 34 (EXDIS), 1/8.)

2. ITALY: MORO WOOS SOCIALISTS

REPORTS FROM EMBASSY ROME INDICATE THAT PRESIDENT LEONE INTENDS TO ASK MORO TO TRY TO FORM A NEW GOVERNMENT.

EMBASSY COMMENT: EITHER THE SOCIALISTS WILL ACCEPT THE GREAT CONCESSIONS THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS ARE NOW REPORT-EDLY PREPARED TO MAKE IN EXCHANGE FOR ABANDONMENT OF SOCIALIST INSISTENCE ON OPEN PCI SUPPORT, OR EARLY ELEC-TIONS WILL BECOME INEVITABLE. (SECRET) ROME 254 AND (LIMI-TED OFFICIAL USE) ROME 268, 1/8.)

3. CONTINUED FIGHTING IN JAMAICA

IN THE LAST TWO DAYS POLITICAL VIOLENCE IN KINGSTON'S GHETTO HAS GONE UNCHECKED. THE RESULTS:

--THREE POLICEMEN AND AT LEAST TEN CIVILIANS HAVE BEEN KILLED. MORE THAN ONE HUNDRED CIVILIANS HAVE BEEN WOUNDED. (ONE POLICEMAN WAS WOUNDED AND ONE SHOT DEAD IN FRONT OF OUR CONSULATE.)

--PRIME MINISTER MANLEY HAS ELIMINATED THE EASILY HIT STATIC POLICE POSTS AND SWITCHED TO MOBILE
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PATROLS.

EMBASSY COMMENT: WE ARE BY NO MEANS SURE THAT THE SITUA-TION IS UNDER CONTROL OR THAT MOBILE PATROLS WILL BE ABLE TO PROVIDE ADEQUATE SECURITY. WHILE IT IS BUSINESS AS USUAL FOR THE MOMENT, WE ARE PREPARED TO CLOSE THE CONSU-LATE ON SHORT NOTICE IF NECESSARY. (CONFIDENTIAL) KINGSTON 110, 1/8.)

4. LEBANON

A. NO SETTLEMENT IN SIGHT

FIGHTING IN THE TEL ZAATAR REFUGEE CAMP CONTINUED UNABATED JANUARY 8, ACCORDING TO EMBASSY BEIRUT, AND HARDENING POSI-

TIONS ON BOTH SIDES OFFER LITTLE HOPE FOR AN EARLY SETTLEMENT. THE EMBASSY ADDS THAT PALESTINIANS APPARENTLY WOULD LIKE TO PUT A DAMPER ON THE FIGHTING -- AT LEAST UNTIL AFTER THE UNSC DEBATE -- AND HAVE MADE LIFTING OF THE TEL ZAATAR SIEGE THEIR IMMEDIATE GOAL. (CONFIDENTIAL) BEIRUT 224, 1/8.)

B. FAHMY CRITICIZED

IN A JANUARY 7 CONVERSATION WITH EMBASSY OFFICERS, EGYPTIAN PRESIDENTIAL SPOKESMAN TAHSIN BASHIR EXPRESSED DEEP PESSIMISM CONCERNING LEBANON AND SOME CRITICISM OF FAHMY FOR ERRONEOUSLY TAKING SADAT'S POLICY OF NONINVOLVEMENT TO BE A MANDATE FOR DOING NOTHING.

EMBASSY COMMENT: BASHIR'S COMMENTS REVEAL MOUNTING FRUSTRATION WITHIN THE EGYPTIAN LEADERSHIP WHICH REALIZES THAT A SYRIAN-ISRAELI CLASH COULD DEAL A FATAL BLOW TO SADAT'S MODERATE POLICIES. (SECRET) CAIRO 214 (LIMDIS), 1/8.)

6. PEKING SHOWS FEW SIGNS OF PUBLIC MOURNING

DESPITE FRONT-PAGE EULOGIES TO CHOU, LOWERING OF THE PRC FLAG TO HALF-MAST IS AS YET THE ONLY SIGN IN PEKING OF OFFICIAL MOURNING. OUR LIAISON OFFICE NOTES THAT GOVERN-
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MENT OFFICES REMAIN OPEN AND RESIDENTS ARE GOING ABOUT THEIR DAILY ROUTINE. (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE) PEKING 47, 1/8.) KISSINGER

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